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Acronyms

ACEC	Areas of Critical Environmental Concern
ADF&G	Alaska Department of Fish and Game
ADNR	Alaska Department of Natural Resources
ADOT&PF	Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
AFO	Anchorage Field Office
AMA	Alaska Miners Association
ANCSA	Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act
ANILCA	Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act
AS	Alaska Statute
BBNA	Bristol Bay Native Association
BLM	Bureau of Land Management
CEQ	Council on Environmental Quality
CIK	Cook Inlet Keeper
CNF	Chugach National Forest
CRSA	Coastal Resource Service Area
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
EO	Executive Order
FLPMA	Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976
IRA	Indian Reorganization Act
LCC	Lynn Canal Conservation
MFP	Management Framework Plan
MOA	Municipality of Anchorage
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act of 1969
NOA	Notice of Availability
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NOAA Fisheries	National Marine Fisheries Service
NPS	National Park Service
NVE	Native Village of Eklutna
NWR	National Wildlife Refuge
OHV	Off-highway Vehicle
PSA	Public Service Announcement
RAC	Resource Advisory Council
RMP	Resource Management Plan
ROD	Record of Decision
RS 2477	Revised Statutes
SLUD	Special Land Use Designation
URS	URS Corporation
US	United States
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
USEPA	United States Environmental Protection Agency
USFS	United States Forest Service
VERP	Visitor Experience Resource Protection
VRM	Visual Resource Management
VUU	Vacant, Un-appropriated, and Unrestricted

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose and Need

The land use planning process is a key tool used by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to manage resources and designate uses on federal lands managed by the BLM. Preparation of a Resource Management Plan (RMP) is a prerequisite to taking specific resource management actions and pursuing additional planning. To the extent possible, the planning process is integrated with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA). The plans resulting from this process are resource management plans. The RMP is a land use decision-making document that provides overall guidance for subsequent management decisions in a designated area. Its purpose is to provide a comprehensive and balanced assessment, while remaining adaptive and flexible in its approach to resource management. The RMP is created through an open, public process, utilizing the input from those who have an interest in these public lands, and the surrounding communities. A RMP provides future direction for the management of the planning area, for site-specific activity planning, and for implementation of management decisions. It provides direction through development of a management framework, but does not commit BLM to specific actions. Rather, BLM must follow the RMP when initiating subsequent implementation actions, and monitor the consistency of these actions with the RMP.

The BLM is required to prepare RMPs for the management of public lands under its jurisdiction. The need for the proposed action is to prepare a resource management plan for lands and resources managed by BLM lands within the planning area as required by the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA). The Act outlines specific parameters and processes with which preparation of RMPs must comply. These parameters and processes are an important component of the purpose and need of the proposed action, and provide guidance regarding what can be considered reasonable planning alternatives to meet project purpose and need.

In 2001, the BLM developed a Preparation Plan to support the planning effort of the Ring of Fire Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement (RMP/EIS). The 2001 Preparation Plan identifies the preliminary issues, management concerns, and planning criteria for the Ring of Fire planning area. The Preparation Plan helps focus the work priorities by creating a concise summary of the issues, questions, and the information needed to address the concerns and develop a science-based process for implementation. It provides the planning team overall guidance allowing them to focus on the development and implementation of the RMP/EIS in a timely manner.

The process of preparing an EIS identifies planning issues and concerns, develops and evaluates reasonable alternatives for the proposed action, describes the affected environment, assesses potential environmental consequences of alternatives, and adequately involves the potentially affected public in the process of preparing the EIS. The EIS will be prepared in compliance with NEPA, Council on Environmental Quality regulations implementing NEPA, FLPMA, and other relevant laws and regulations, including the BLM H-1601-1 Land Use Planning Handbook. The NEPA/RMP process includes nine basic steps of the BLM planning process (refer to Figure 2, section 5.0). The process requires the use of an interdisciplinary team to complete each step.

1.2 Description of the Planning Area

The BLM Anchorage Field Office (AFO) is preparing a RMP/EIS that will address BLM's management of public land and Federal mineral estate managed by the AFO from below the Dixon Entrance in southeast Alaska to Attu Island at the end of the Aleutian Chain. This planning area spans a linear distance of some 2,500 miles, but includes only a portion of the 16 million acres of land under the management jurisdiction of the AFO. The boundaries are the Canadian border on the southeast part of the planning area and southeast Alaska from Annette Island to Yakutat; the portion of southcentral Alaska that includes the Matanuska-Susitna Borough, Municipality of Anchorage (MOA), and Kenai Peninsula Borough; the Kodiak Island Borough; and portions of the Alaska Peninsula, and the Aleutian Island Chain in the western part of the planning area.

BLM-managed surface and mineral estate within the planning area and covered by the Ring of Fire RMP/EIS includes about 1,300,000 acres (surface estate) of BLM-administered lands ranging from large blocks to small scattered tracts. Approximately 813,000 acres of the 1.3 million acres have been selected by the State of Alaska and Native corporations, but have not yet been conveyed. Not all of the land selected will be conveyed. Due to overselection, BLM will retain management of some of the selected land. Lands administered by BLM and not selected total approximately 463,000 acres.

A map of the planning area is shown in Figure 1.

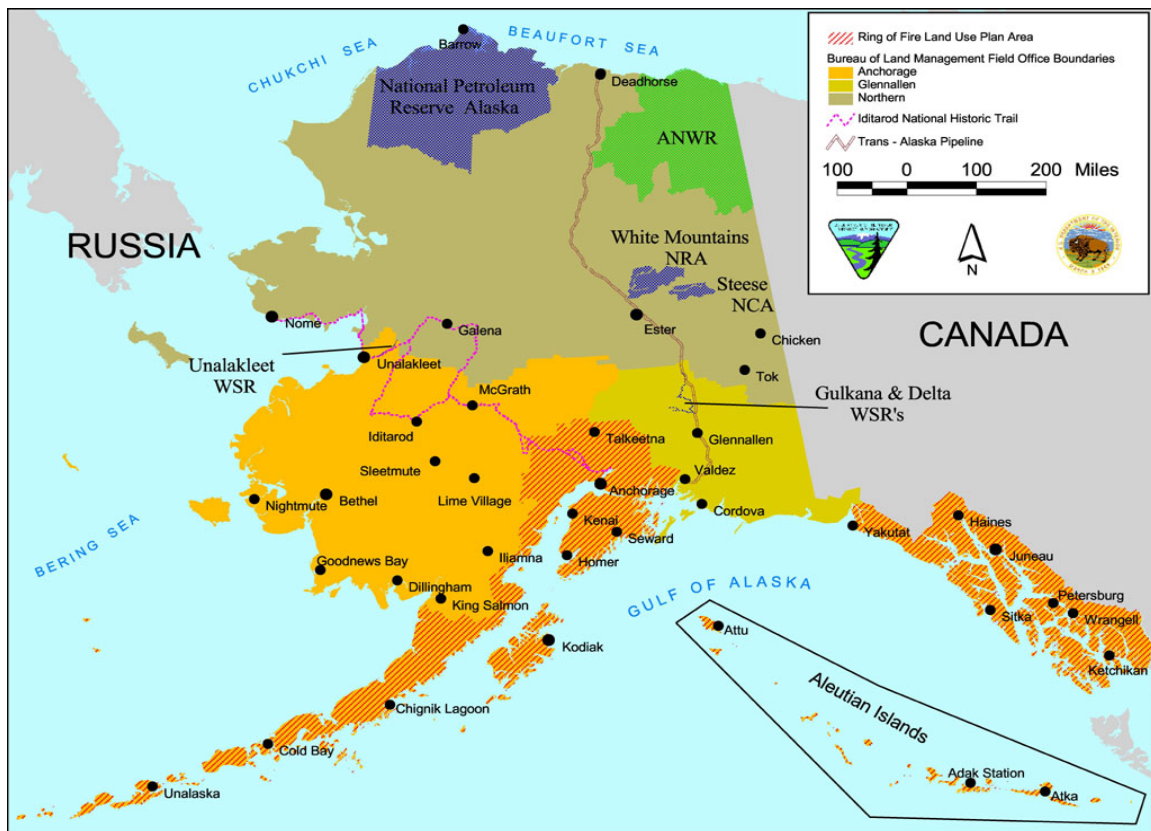


Figure 1 Project Location Map

1.3 Description of the Scoping Process

The scoping process serves to identify land use issues and conflicts. These issues may stem from new information or changed circumstances, the need to address environmental protection concerns, or a need to reassess the appropriate mix of allowable uses based on new information. Scoping is designed to be an open, public activity for identifying the scope of significant environmental issues related to the proposed project that should be addressed for NEPA compliance. It is typically accomplished through written communications, public scoping meetings, and formal and informal consultation with agency officials, interested individuals, and groups.

The scoping process for the Ring of Fire RMP involves establishing a scope of analysis for preparation of the RMP/EIS. The RMP is subject to certain parameters related to 1) geographic scope, scale, and availability of information, 2) a reasonably foreseeable planning horizon, 3) compatibility with other plans, and 4) public involvement. In addition, FLPMA and BLM planning regulations require that RMPs address specific factors of analysis.

Geographic Scope: The RMP geographic boundaries encompass a large area that contains relatively unconsolidated and smaller parcels of BLM administered lands. Much of these lands lie within the jurisdictional boundaries of other federal, state and local government units. In many cases, there is limited information available on BLM parcels from field studies. The irregular distribution of BLM lands, in conjunction with jurisdictional considerations and data limitations, will have a bearing on the range and scale of practical management options.

Planning Horizon: A RMP is intended to be a flexible and adaptive management tool for public lands. It will provide direction for managing lands and resources, and recommendations for future actions to implement the RMP. The anticipated life of the RMP should be 10-15 years before undergoing an update and amendment. The planning horizon for the Ring of Fire RMP will be set appropriately.

Compatibility: A RMP must be prepared in a manner that is consistent to the maximum extent practicable with management plans of adjacent areas. The Ring of Fire planning area contains a number of federal, state, and local jurisdictions. Preparation of the Ring of Fire RMP will include an evaluation of pertinent federal, state, and local management plans.

Public Involvement: Integral to the planning and environmental process is the public participation program, which keeps relevant agencies and the interested public engaged in the project's progress. Preparation of the Ring of Fire RMP/EIS will provide the public an opportunity to 1) make recommendations on how resources should be managed and 2) review the decision-making options for resource management on public lands in the Ring of Fire management area.

This document represents a public record of the scoping activities that began on March 19, 2003, when the Notice of Intent was published for the Ring of Fire RMP/EIS. Comments were received through July 31, 2003, and are presented in this document. Project scoping materials are located in the Appendices and include:

- Appendix A Federal Register Notice of Intent
- Appendix B Project mailing list
- Appendix C Advertisements, radio, and community announcements
- Appendix D Project newsletter and comment form
- Appendix E Public scoping meeting information including sign-in sheets, meeting minutes (formal and informal meetings), issues raised, comment response forms, and public scoping comments
- Appendix F Agency scoping meeting information including agency coordination letters, sign-in sheets, meeting minutes, and issues raised, and agency scoping comments
- Appendix G Native tribal communication including Native Government-to-Government invitational letter, informal meeting minutes, issues raised, and Native scoping comments

The public and agency scoping meetings began on April 28, 2003 and were held in seven locations in Alaska. The scoping meetings were held to disseminate project information, and identify issues and concerns that 1) should be addressed in the RMP/EIS, and 2) should be used to select the best overall alternative that would meet the purpose and need objectives of this project.

A range of opportunities for broader public participation was provided throughout the scoping process, including newsletters, a project web site, informal meetings, and informational letters. A brief overview is provided below.

Mailing List: A initial mailing list was developed that included members of the general public; federal, state and local government agencies and groups; the BLM Resource Advisory Council; public interest groups; Alaska Native organizations; and media groups. The mailing list is included in Appendix B.

Newsletter and Comment Form: A newsletter and comment form with project information and a public scoping meeting announcement was prepared and mailed in April 2003 to parties included on the mailing list. A copy of the newsletter and comment form is included in Appendix D. The newsletter and comment form were also included in the project site. In addition, a synopsis of the newsletter including the scoping meeting dates and deadline for comments was presented on “WHAT’S UP”, which is a weekly compilation of environmental events and meetings that are sent to subscribers via e-mail.

Public Notices: Public notices for scoping meetings were prepared that included information on the project and location of scoping meetings. Public notices were advertised in the following newspapers.

NEWSPAPERS	
Anchorage Daily News 1001 Northway Drive Anchorage, AK 99501 √ May 6, 2003	Frontiersman 5751 E Mayflower Ct. Wasilla, AK 99654 √ May 4, 2003
Peninsula Clarion 150 Trading Bay Dr Ste 1 or PO Box 3009 Kenai, AK 99611 √ April 29, 2003	Juneau Empire 3100 Channel Drive Juneau, AK 99801-7814 √ April 18, 2003
Skagway News PO Box 498 Skagway, AK 99840-0495 √ April 25, 2003	Chilkat Valley News Main Street/PO Box 630 Haines, AK 99827 √ April 24, 2003

A public meeting notice was prepared and faxed to each of the following.

- City of Juneau
- City of Craig
- City of Skagway
- City of Haines
- City of Wasilla
- Matanuska-Susitna Borough
- City of Kenai
- Kenai Peninsula Borough
- Kenai National Wildlife Refuge
- City of Kodiak
- Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge
- United States (US) Coast Guard, Kodiak

Copies of the public notices for scoping meetings are included in Appendix C.

Public Service Announcements (PSA): A PSA advertising the scoping meetings was prepared and sent to the following radio stations:

RADIO	
The Mix KMXS 103.1 FM Anchorage Media 9200 Lake Otis Parkway Anchorage, AK 99507 √ May 2, 2003	Fox KBFX 100.5 FM Clear Channel Radio 800 East Dimond Blvd. Anchorage, AK 99517 √ May 2, 2003
KBEAR 104 FM Anchorage Media 9200 Lake Otis Parkway Anchorage, AK 99507 √ May 2, 2003	KENI 650 AM (news talk) Clear Channel Radio 800 East Dimond Blvd. Anchorage, AK 99517 √ May 2, 2003
KSKA 91.1 FM Alaska Public Telecommunications 3877 University Drive Anchorage, AK 99508 √ May 2, 2000	KDLL 91.9 FM Kenai PO Box 2111 Kenai, AK 99611 √ May 2, 2003
KHNS 102.3 FM Last Frontier Radio Haines, AK 99827 √ April 22, 2003	KTOO 104.3 FM 360 Egan Dr Juneau, AK 99801 √ April 21, 2003
KJNO 630 AM Juneau Talk radio 3161 Channel Drive Ste 2 Juneau AK 99801 √ April 22, 2003	KMXT 100.1 FM Kodiak Supported by: AK Public Broadcasting Commission PO Box 110223 Juneau, AK 99811-0223 √ May 2, 2003
KINY 800 AM kinyradio.com for PSAs Juneau, Skagway, and Haines √ April 21, 2003	Homer Radio KBBI AM 890 Homer kbbinews@alaska.net √ May 2, 2003

Copies of the PSAs are included in Appendix C.

Alaska Native Tribal Governments Consultation and Coordination: Consultation and Coordination with federally recognized Alaska Native Tribal governments was extended to Alaska Native Tribes located within the project area. A letter describing the project and encouraging participation in the planning process was mailed on April 14, 2003. The Alaska Native Tribal government mailing list is included in Appendix B, and the coordination letter is in Appendix G. Meetings were held with representatives of tribal governments during scoping hearings where interest was indicated.

Agency Consultation and Coordination: Federal, state, and local agencies with an interest in or responsibility for land within the project area were mailed a letter on April 14, 2003,

which contained project information, the agency scoping meeting announcement, and a request for information and comments. This information is included in Appendix F.

Public Scoping Meetings: Seven public scoping meetings were conducted. The scoping meeting format and all information presented was the same at all meetings. During the one-hour open house session, attendees viewed presentation boards and maps that displayed conceptual project information. A project overview was presented at 7 p.m., followed by a question and answer period. All meetings were held from 6 p.m. until 9 p.m. Comment forms were available at the meetings, which could be filled out during the meeting or mailed later. The sign-in-sheets, meeting minutes, issues raised, and comment response forms are included in Appendix E. The following table is a list of locations and dates for the public scoping meetings.

PUBLIC MEETINGS	
Centennial Hall Juneau √ April 28, 2003	National Park Service Visitor Center Skagway √ April 29, 2003
Haines Borough Public Library √ April 30, 2003	Colony High School Theater Palmer √ May 5, 2003
Kenai Central High School Little Theater √ May 8, 2003	Kodiak High School Commons Area √ May 12, 2003
BLM Anchorage Field Office Training Room √ May 13, 2003	

Informal Meetings: In addition to formal public meetings, the project team met informally with local groups (primarily federal, state, local government and native organizations) to provide a project briefing, and to identify issues that should be addressed in the planning process. Synopses of the discussions are included in Appendix E. The following table lists the groups with which the project team met.

INFORMAL PUBLIC MEETINGS	
City and Borough of Juneau, Juneau √ April 28, 2003	US Forest Service at the Federal Building, Juneau √ April 28, 2003
City of Skagway, Skagway √ April 29, 2003	NPS Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park, Skagway √ April 29, 2003
Haines Borough, Haines √ April 30, 2003	Kenai National Wildlife Refuge, Kenai √ May 8, 2003
Kenai Borough Planning Department, Kenai √ May 8, 2003	Kodiak Island Borough, Kodiak √ May 12, 2003

Municipality of Anchorage Planning Department, Anchorage √ June 18, 2003	Matanuska-Susitna Borough Planning Department, Palmer √ July 1, 2003
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Agency Scoping Meeting: On April 14, 2003, an invitational letter was mailed out to 48 Alaska agencies requesting their presence and comments at the agency meeting. The agency scoping meeting was held on May 14, 2003, from 9 a.m. until 11:30 a.m. at the BLM AFO Training Room. During the open house session, from 9 a.m. until 10 a.m., attendees viewed presentation boards and maps that displayed conceptual project information. A project overview was presented at 10 a.m., and was followed by a question and answer period. Copies of the invitational letter, sign-in sheets, meeting minutes, and issues raised are in Appendix F.

Alaska Native Tribal Scoping: On April 14, 2003, an invitational letter was mailed out to federally recognized Alaska Native tribes and other Native entities in the project area requesting their presence and comments at the public scoping meetings. The mailing list is included in Appendix B, and the invitational letter, issues raised, and Native comments are included in Appendix G.

The Chilkat Indian Village in Klukwan, an Indian Reorganization Act (IRA) Council near Haines in southeast Alaska, requested an informal meeting with the project team, which was held on April 30, 2003, at 1:30 p.m. The Chilkoot Indian Association IRA was present at the meeting with the Haines Borough on April 30, 2003, at 10 a.m. The meeting minutes are included in Appendix G. A representative of Eklutna Inc. attended the public meeting in Anchorage.

2.0 ISSUE SUMMARY

2.1 Summary of Scoping Comments

Public Scoping Meeting Comments: Seven public scoping meetings were held in April and May 2003, to solicit comments from interested individuals, Native tribal entities, and public interest organizations. Section 1.3 presents a list of the public meeting dates and locations, and informal meeting dates and locations. The sign-in sheets, public meeting minutes, synopses of the informal meetings, and issues raised are included in Appendix E, as well as other public comments received by e-mail or US mail. Comments from the public and informal scoping meetings are summarized below.

Public scoping comments covered the range of issues (see section 2.2 and Appendix E). Some of the most common issues include access, coordination and compatibility, land status/tenure, commercial recreation, Off-highway Vehicle (OHV) use, wildlife and habitat, and wild and scenic rivers.

Informal Scoping Meeting Comments: Several informal meetings were held in April and May 2003, to solicit comments from interested federal/state/local government entities, Native tribal entities, and organizations. The range and focus of comments from the informal meetings were similar to areas emphasized in the overall comments, including access, coordination and compatibility, land status/tenure, location of BLM lands, commercial recreation, and OHV use.

Agency Scoping Meeting Comments: The agency scoping meeting was held in Anchorage, on May 14, 2003. Seventeen agency representatives attended the scoping meeting. The sign-in sheet, meeting minutes, agency comment letters, and all agencies issues raised are included in Appendix F.

Agency scoping comments focused primarily on coordination and compatibility, land status/tenure, available information on location of BLM lands, and access. Agencies requested that the planning process recognize respective roles of other agencies in managing lands and resources; integrate their relevant planning documents; and coordinate with programs and activities on adjacent or nearby lands. Access issues covered siting easements, trails, and roads located in the planning area; addressing land selections established for access; enforcement and monitoring; and consideration of transportation corridors, port sites, and airport expansion.

Native Scoping Meeting Comments: The Chilkat Indian Village IRA was the only tribal entity that requested an informal meeting. The project team and the Chilkat Indian Village met on April 30, 2003. The meeting minutes and issues raised are included in Appendix G. The Chilkoot Indian Association IRA and the Native Village of Eklutna IRA submitted written comments that are included in Appendix G.

Native organization scoping comments covered the range of issues presented above. Some of the most common issues include access (specifically location, enforcement, and monitoring), coordination and compatibility with management of Native lands, land status/tenure (including processing applications for Native allotments and Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) corporation selections), commercial recreation, OHV, subsistence, protecting land and water, environmental resource values, and wildlife and habitat.

2.2 Issues Identified During Scoping

The issues identified during scoping have primarily been categorized under the factors of analysis that BLM was required to identify in the 2001 Preparation Plan. The factors of analysis present the preliminary issues and concerns that help to organize the planning issues and present them in a manner that facilitates the preparation of alternatives and evaluation of environmental consequences. When a scoping issue did not fit under one of the BLM factors of analysis, a new category was created. The issues are presented by topic and may include a variety of specific statements of concern for each topic. For example, comments received on access raised issues regarding both ANCSA, 17(b) easements, and Revised Statutes (RS) 2477 easements. Comment topics and their definitions are as follows:

- Access: comments regarding ANCSA 17(b), RS 2477, and utility corridor easements; trails; access to potential resource development; and public recreational areas.
- Alaska Natives: comments regarding Government-to-Government consultation and general Native issues.
- Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC): comments regarding areas that have particularly high values or sensitivities for fish and wildlife, recreation, subsistence, and visual impacts.
- Coal: comments regarding potential coal exploration, leasing, and development.
- Coordination and Compatibility: comments regarding coordination with other federal and state agencies and local government; compatibility with other plans and uses, and consistent management with federal and state lands.
- Cultural Resources: comments regarding potential archaeological and historic resources, and areas of traditional cultural importance.
- Enforcement and Monitoring: comments regarding enforcement on BLM lands, and monitoring effects of permits and land use decisions.
- Environmental Justice: comments regarding Executive Order (EO) 12898, for Environmental Justice.
- Fire and Fuel Management: comments regarding fire and fuel management plans.
- Fish and Habitat: comments regarding fish populations, habitat, high value areas, and sensitive areas (e.g. overwintering habitat).
- Land Tenure/Status: comments regarding the status of land ownership, including Native allotments, ANCSA corporation and State selections, municipal entitlements, and land trades/disposals.
- Land Use: comments regarding potential land use conflicts, preferred uses, temporary use permits, withdrawals (e.g. Federal Energy Regulatory Commission power site withdrawals), and special management areas (e.g. Campbell Tract).

- Mineral Development: comments regarding hard rock and placer mining, and construction materials.
- NEPA Compliance: comments regarding the NEPA process, schedule, and public involvement.
- Off-highway Vehicles: comments regarding OHV use, access, conflicts with other uses, and area designation.
- Oil and Gas: comments regarding oil, natural gas, shallow natural gas, and coal bed methane exploration and development, including areas open and closed to development.
- Recreation: comments regarding commercial recreation and tourism, sport hunting and fishing, and general recreation.
- Subsistence: comments regarding subsistence species, subsistence use areas, and access to subsistence resources.
- Threatened and Endangered Species: comments regarding potential threatened, endangered, and special status species.
- Timber Management and Harvest: comments regarding commercial harvest and personal use, (e.g. firewood).
- Visual Resources: comments regarding visual resource management (VRM) classification and impacts on visual resources.
- Water Resources: comments regarding hydrology, allocation of water rights, lake and river management, water quality, and temporary water use.
- Wetlands/Vegetation: comments regarding the potential impacts to wetland areas and vegetation, and potential invasive species.
- Wild and Scenic Rivers: comments regarding designation and management of wild and scenic rivers.
- Wildlife and Habitat: comments regarding potential impacts to wildlife populations, habitat, and sensitive use areas (e.g. Dall sheep lambing and mountain goat wintering).
- Wilderness: comments regarding designation and management.

The scoping comments received on the Ring of Fire RMP/EIS have been categorized under issue topics that are based on 1) the factors of analysis that BLM is required to address in preparing an RMP, and 2) additional issues raised by the public. Scoping comments received during scoping are presented below (for more detailed comments see Appendices E, F, and G).

Scoping Comments
Access
Define the Gulkana decision (Alaska Miners Association, Inc. (AMA)).
Address access issues on the west side of the Cook Inlet (Cook Inlet Keeper (CIK)).
Address surface access in the RMP as a major planning issue (AMA).
Maintain access to state or state selected lands where BLM lands are located adjacent to state lands that are not state selected. Clarify access where BLM owns the subsurface and a different entity owns the surface estate (Alaska Department of Natural Resources (ADNR)).
Show all roads, trails and historic access routes on all maps and identify them with their BLM and/or State of Alaska identification numbers (AMA).
Include and integrate the State of Alaska land selections that were established for access roads in the planning area where they exist (AMA).
Address access for local population to get to recreational area around Haines and Klukwan (Chilkat Indian Village IRA, Klukwan).
Plan for access for miners in Section 28 near Porcupine. This is an important part of Timber Sales (Haines Borough).
Maintain or minimize access and capacity impact assessments to improve management strategies and to minimize littering, poaching, and other impact to these lands (Native Village of Eklutna (NVE)).
Resolve the access through the ‘Dennis’ allotment, which is needed as an alternative route to access Chilkoot Lake and beyond (Chilkat Indian Village IRA, Klukwan).
Include RS 2477 trails and section line easements in any access discussion and mapping effort for the RMP. Additionally, identify 17(b) access trails and site easements on private lands that provide access to public lands in the planning area and provide maps (ADNR).
Recognize 17(b) trail and site easements and map as part of this planning process so that the public is aware of their location; in order to reduce trespass problems and assist the public in gaining legal access to public use areas (ADNR).
Address 17(b) easement issues in RMP (United States Forest Service (USFS), Juneau).

Access
Identify and recognize all easement and rights-of-way in this planning effort and work with the state to pursue a recordable disclaimer of interest on the part of BLM for the rights of way in this planning area (ADNR).
Evaluate all coastal areas for port facilities and categorize coastal areas for potential use as a port or transfer point (AMA).
Consider State transportation planning policies and documents relevant to the Ring of Fire planning area. Envision transportation corridors laid out in the Southwest Alaska Transportation Plan. The objective of these corridors is to connect communities, improve efficiencies and enhance potential for economic development (ADNR).
Prioritize access for transportation and utility infrastructure to mineralized areas, and take into consideration the need for flexibility in implementation based on land ownership and physical characteristics of the terrain (ADNR).
Consider logical transportation corridors throughout Matanuska-Susitna Borough (Mat-Su Borough).
Consider potential airport expansion for both economic development and for runway expansion, including rural planning area transportation corridors for resource development, rural airports, and harbors and docks (ADNR).
Joint plan for winter surface [motorized] use [in Chugach National Forest] (United States Forest Service (USFS)).
Reevaluate and possibly terminate Juneau access project (National Park Service (NPS), Skagway).
Provide adequate public notice and opportunity to comment on proposed 17(b) easement termination (ADNR).
Alaska Statute (AS) 38.05.140 (f) states that within the area from south of Pilot Point through Kvichak Bay, north of Egigik Bay, no surface area entry permit to develop an oil or gas lease and gas exploration license may be issued on state owned or controlled land until the legislature by appropriate resolution specifically finds that the entry will not constitute danger to the fishery (ADNR).
Determine potential for expanding residential up West Creek (City of Skagway).
Provide access for Skagway to send hydropower from Goat Lake and upper Dewey Lake to Haines (City of Skagway).
Consider connecting Eklutna Water line with Abbott Reservation, through Campbell Tract (Municipality of Anchorage (MOA)).
Alaska Native
Contact appropriate Native corporations and consider their views (ADNR).
Contact and consider the views of the appropriate Native corporations and/or the State of Alaska, prior to implementing a more specific management program or issuing a permit involving these lands (ADNR).

Alaska Native
Develop the EIS in consultation with all affected Alaskan Native tribal governments, consistent with EO 13175 (<i>Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments</i>) (US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA)).
Seek and integrate the Traditional Knowledge of Alaskan Natives in the analyses of the RMP/EIS (USEPA).
Invite affected Tribal governments to participate in the EIS development process as cooperating agencies. Fulfill EO 13175, and documentation of these consultations should appear in the EIS. Integration of Traditional Knowledge in the RMP/EIS development process will provide an important context for evaluating the impacts of the proposed RMP (USEPA).
Areas of Critical Environmental Concern
Include identification of ACEC in the RMP (Public Comment, Anchorage).
Assess and address ACEC (NVE).
Designate appropriate important migratory bird habitat in the Aleutian area as ACEC designation (Aleutians West Coastal Resource Service Area (Aleutians West CRSA)).
Address critical habitat for Steller sea lions found throughout the entire range of the project area (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)).
Coal
Include coal bed methane development in the Draft EIS (CIK).
Coordination and Compatibility
Consult with the state, and manage consistently any areas proposed for Wilderness with the special provisions of Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) that amend the Wilderness Act of 1964 (ADNR).
Consult with ADNR and give ADNR a chance to review and comment before taking any actions that may potentially negatively impact resource development on state lands (ADNR).
Consult with the state prior to developing policies regarding helicopter use on state selected lands in this area (ADNR).
Exhaust available state management options prior to developing duplicative or conflicting regulations for public uses occurring in adjacent areas (Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G)).
Consult with the state prior to developing policies regarding commercial recreation on state selected lands in the Special Use Land Designation (SLUD) area (ADNR).
Consult with the state prior to developing policies regarding motorized use on state selected lands in the project area (ADNR).
Recognize existing state authorities relative to fish and wildlife management (ADNR).

Coordination and Compatibility
Recognize that the State is interested in encouraging development in the Bristol Bay area and the Alaskan Peninsula, and would appreciate the opportunity to specifically review and comment on any proposed actions that may limit or discourage oil and gas exploration and development in these areas (ADNR).
Facilitate a public meeting in Homer on the Draft EIS (CIK).
Facilitate follow-up meetings with agencies (USFS, Anchorage).
Recognize Klukwan in 'formal' Government-to-Government setting for future meeting (Chilkat Indian Village IRA, Klukwan).
Provide adequate public notice and opportunity to comment on proposed 17(b) easement termination (ADNR).
Coordinate recreational management plan for Haines and Klukwan area with Eagle Management Plan, because helicopter, jet boat, and raft use results in trash that can create potential conflicts in land use (Chilkat Indian Village IRA, Klukwan).
Coordinate with management plans in special use areas, such as refuges and critical habitat areas that already have an OHV policy (ADF&G).
Consult and integrate the planning documents of local governments, especially coastal management plans (ADF&G).
Consider updated borough land management policies (Title 16,17, and 23) and incorporate into the RMP (Mat-Su Borough).
Coordinate with the City and Borough of Juneau comprehensive plan for zoning use of BLM adjacent lands and the area around Twin Lake (City and Borough of Juneau).
Plan for a BLM and City and Borough of Juneau development plan or subdivision and land disposal- such as residential lands near Twin Lakes. Identify mechanisms to plan and administer subdivision development and sale (City and Borough of Juneau).
Coordinate with the City and Borough of Juneau comprehensive plan for zoning use of BLM adjacent lands and the area around Twin Lake (City and Borough of Juneau).
Communicate with adjoining landowners to make a comprehensive plan (Mat-Su Borough).
Keep area-wide plans contiguous (Mat-Su Borough).
Consider and coordinate with the Knik River Community Council process (Mat-Su Borough).
Schedule for completion of Kenai National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) Comprehensive Conservation Plan (Kenai National Wildlife Refuge (NWR)).
Involve the Native Village of Eklutna in any planning for mining activities (NVE).
Involve the Native Village of Eklutna in any planning for Wild and Scenic River designations (NVE).
Coordinate for activities on adjacent non-BLM lands, it may be difficult to resolve competing or conflicting land uses (ADF&G).

Coordination and Compatibility
Coordinate with NOAA Fisheries, section 7(a)(2) of the Endangered Species Act. This directs interagency cooperation ‘to ensure that any action authorized, funded, or carried out by such agency is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of any endangered species or threatened species; or result in the destruction or adverse modification of critical habitat (NOAA).
Conduct the Ring of Fire RMP consistently for the entire 1.3 million acres. The RMP should act as a clear tool for how resource management and protection is to be conducted within the planning area (USEPA).
Arrange to undertake studies to determine the location and extent, resource occurrence patterns and values, and best management practices for BLM area holdings. NVE would pursue funding and participate in these assessments (NVE).
Understand which lands and interests in land the plan will (and will not) address. As the planning process progresses and more definitive land status is developed more extensive coordination with the state will clearly be beneficial (ADNR).
Consider the Bragaw Street expansion, which is a BLM preferred alternative and could be part of the RMP (MOA).
Recognize competing recreation user groups in the MOA Greenbelt and Parks area wide recreation plan (MOA).
Provide information to Land Information System on management and land ownership in Municipality of Anchorage (MOA).
Cultural Resources
Plan for the protection of historical and cultural sites along the Chilkoot River (Chilkoot Indian Association, Haines).
Address the ‘museum of the Aleutians’ for protection of cultural and archaeological resources (Aleutians West CRSA).
Consider that archaeological surveys have been conducted in the planning area and have identified a significant number of historic properties. Much of this area has not been surveyed, however, and based upon existing survey results one would expect to find of historic properties within this planning area. When any federal ‘undertaking’ including any action funded or authorized by the federal government with the potential to directly or indirectly affect any archaeological or historic site is planned, a consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act must be initiated. If archaeological or historic sites are identified in the project area their significance should be evaluated to determine their eligibility for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places (36 CFR 60) (ADNR).
Resolve responsibility issues over archaeology site considering Native Selection for Cultural Importance 14(h)(1) (Haines Borough).

Enforcement and Monitoring
Monitor, systematically evaluate and report RMP implementation effectiveness for each proposed management strategy in the planning area (USEPA).
Terminate passive management, and power withdrawals (Haines Borough).
Consider the human impacts to the Chilkoot River corridor, which is a culturally and environmentally sensitive area and a mecca for tourists and locals (Chilkoot Indian Association, Haines).
Environmental Justice
Identify potential impacts and mitigation measures developed in consultation with the minority and/or low-income populations and include them in the EIS to comply with EO 12898 (USEPA).
Identify impacts on low income and people of color to include cumulative and indirect impacts, exposure pathways unique to the impacted communities, historic exposures, and impacts to cultural, historic and protected resources (USEPA).
Determine if the impacts on the low income and people of color communities will be disproportionately higher than those impacts on non-low income and people of non-color communities. Identify a reference community and provide a justification for utilizing this reference community (USEPA).
Recognize Klukwan in ‘formal’ government-to-government setting for future meeting (Chilkat Indian Village IRA, Klukwan).
Provide a discussion of efforts made to receive input from effected low income and people of color communities (USEPA).
Include a description of the methodology and criteria utilized for identifying the low income and people of color communities (USEPA).
Fire and Fuel Management
Rename the Fire and Fuel Management issue to read Wildland Fire and Fuel Management. Wildfire has a definition of: an unwanted wildland fire (BLM Alaska Fire Service, Fairbanks).
Plan for consistency of fuel management on large scale such as bark beetle on Kenai or chemical controls [vegetation treatment] with adjacent Federal lands (USFS Anchorage).
Address fire issues in the RMP (Kenai Peninsula Borough).
Address fire as a continuing issue (dry winter and spring); on the refuge, beetle outbreak is essentially over; 1947 burn is now “ripe” to support a fire; 350,000 acres of fuel, 1967 burn has not yet reached that stage. Within the wilderness, natural ignition will be allowed to burn in wilderness; south of Tustamena is the highest risk, could reach catastrophic level and reach Homer (Kenai NWR).
Consider fire and fuel management, however the birch woodlands are relatively stable (NVE).
Fish and Habitat
Identify the special trout management areas that include 19 Catch-and-Release areas, 6 fly fishing only areas, and 26 un-baited single-hook area (ADNR).

Fish and Habitat
Identify the Southwest Sport Fish Management Area and the Bristol Bay Fisheries Reserve that are located in the project area. The Southwest Sport Fish Management Area includes all water and drainages flowing into Bristol Bay north of Cape Menshikof, Kuskokwim Bay, and the Kuskokwim River and its tributaries from Aniak River downstream to Kuskokwim Bay. Consider the Southwest Alaska Rainbow Trout Management Plan (ADNR).
Recognize existing state authorities relative to fish and wildlife management (ADNR).
Acknowledge that the Native Village of Eklutna wants to keep its traditional lands environmentally sound and in natural condition and obtain, manage, or cooperatively manage and otherwise influence to protect the health of the village and environment. The tribe is pursuing funding to purchase wetlands and other important fish and wildlife habitat, to be managed under land trust status, or possibly under conservation easements (NVE).
AS 38.05.140 (f) states that within the area from south of Pilot Point through Kvichak Bay, north of Egigik Bay, no surface area entry permit to develop an oil or gas lease and gas exploration license may be issued on state owned or controlled land until the legislature by appropriate resolution specifically finds that the entry will not constitute danger to the fishery (ADNR).
Organize conveyance in Chilkoot River corridor for economic development (Haines Borough).
Consider indirect impacts associated with the conveyance of Eklutna lands (MOA).
Address Butte/Knik area issues and Eklutna Native Corporation conveyance (Mat-Su Borough).
Resolve conveyance of Harlen parcel west of Skagway and recognize Skagway selection up the valley as in holding in National Park (City of Skagway).
Transfer lands from state to community for community expansion (City of Skagway).
Transfer Campbell Tract to MOA when BLM no longer has a use for it. It would be a useful recreational space (ball fields), although the MOA does not necessarily want the title for it (Anchorage, MOA).
Transfer Mayflower (Douglas) Island to City of Juneau if BLM surpluses or sells it; special federal legislation to convey land to City and Borough of Juneau by Bureau of Mines (City and Borough of Juneau).
Assess status of power withdrawal on BLM lands within 200 feet of Chilkoot Lake (Haines Borough).
Revoke power site classification at Chilkoot Lake in Haines (Haines Public).
Support agreement for Skagway to send hydropower from Goat Lake and upper Dewey Lake to Haines (City of Skagway).
Consider ANCSA subsurface land issues in Mat-Su area (Mat-Su Borough).
Support mining in West Creek and plan for access (City of Skagway).
Consider Alaska Department of Transportation's (ADOT&PF) responsibility for state airports, transportation corridors, and the ferry system; consider potential airport expansion for both economic development as well as for runway expansion and enhancements; consider access roads to existing and future facilities; and transportation corridors for resource development, rural airports, and harbors and docks (ADNR).

Fish and Habitat
Concerns expressed if the re-opening of the Campbell Airstrip is being considered (MOA).
Consider trans-peninsula corridors and potential deep-water port facilities originally identified through the Bristol Bay Cooperative Management Plan which was a cooperative planning effort between State and Federal agencies, conducted pursuant to ANILCA Section 1203 (ADNR).
Consider the transportation corridors laid out in the southwest Alaska Transportation Plan: the 'Alaska Peninsula Highway Corridor' segments envisioned for Chignik- Port Heiden- Ugashik- Egegik may cross BLM lands. Of particular interest is the Governor's recent proposal for transportation corridor from King Salmon to Chignik (ADNR).
Consider resource transfer facilities such as log transfer facilities, ports to export oil and gas and other minerals, as well as docks for state ferries and other vessels particularly on the northern and southern shores of the Alaska Peninsula. Without detailed land status it is difficult to make specific recommendations. Given current information it appears that most coastal land is either native or state selected (ADNR).
Manage BLM lands effectively to allow Haines Borough logging sales in the interim of conveyance (Haines Borough).
Assess issues concerning the Chilkoot River side, of Old Glory Road, which was a 1988 logging area and a concern for Chilkat Indian Village (Chilkat Indian Village IRA, Klukwan).
Consider real estate issues in the Mat-Su area (Mat-Su Borough).
Provide for the development of utility corridors in cases of hydrocarbon discoveries on the north side of the Alaska Peninsula or Outer Continental Shelf, trans-peninsula corridors may become necessary to transport product to deep-water ports on the south side of the peninsula given the renewed interest in exploration and development in this region; this is an important priority for the state (ADNR).
Request that no area be studied for further land management restrictions, including wilderness designation, wild and scenic rivers, etc; the ANILCA 'no more' clause does not allow such studies and the recent Secretary's decision prohibits such studies unless the Congressional delegation and the Governor agree and so request (AMA).
Consider future activity plan on Campbell Tract; since last plan, positions have hardened with less compromise (MOA).
Resolve conflicts with helicopter activity (goat hunting, protecting subsistence, helicopter noise from heli-skiing; flying lower than 1,500 feet over Chilkoot Lake (no summer helicopter cooperation), and protecting the eagle preserve over Chilkat Lake) (Chilkat Indian Village IRA, Klukwan).
Land Tenure/Status
Identify all federal withdrawals including Public Land Orders, secretarial orders, congressional acts, etc. on the maps and include the purpose of each in the plan (AMA).
Identify all state and Native selections in the plan and show them on the maps (AMA).
Coordinate with the State on water bodies to resolve issues concerning ownership and use of rivers, lakes, and streams within the BLM owned lands where management conflicts arise (ADNR).
Classify and clarify selected lands with regard to Vacant, Un-appropriated, and Unrestricted policy (Haines Borough).
Clarify ownership of 7,000 acres selected by Skagway but tied up in court under native allotment claim. NPS management or acquisition of this land is not welcomed by the city (City of Skagway).

Land Tenure/Status
Assess land status of Portage Valley area lands (MOA).
Distinguish between ownership and identification. Some lands identified as borough are state selected but not yet acquired through municipal entitlement (Kenai Peninsula Borough).
Clarify ownership in the lower Portage Creek drainage lots. A large block of land in Portage is under joint management agreement between BLM/USFS, there are a number of 5-acre tracts open to selection in the area, but there are no records of this due to BLM lands not showing up if they are less than half a section (MOA).
Clarify opportunities in RMP for BLM to transfer (through sales, exchanges and other) remnant lots to City and Borough of Juneau or adjacent landowners. Many BLM lots scattered through town are probably appropriate for BLM to dispose of (City and Borough of Juneau).
Assist Kenai Peninsula Borough in determining where the Borough may need public lands retained (Kenai Peninsula Borough).
Resolve lack of conveyance in Chilkoot River corridor for management purposes (Haines Borough).
Mineral Development
Encourage and foster exploration and development in the area north and west of Lake Illimana (AMA).
Include an experienced geologist or mining engineer from the BLM minerals office to address mineral issues (AMA).
Include one geologist from the US Geological Survey Alaska Science Center as part of the planning team to assist in understanding the undiscovered mineral potential and map all mineral occurrences in the area, including active state and federal mining claims and an appendix in the plan of all known minerals and mining reports (AMA).
Incorporate minerals and access data in the first phase of the plan development (AMA).
Identify sedimentary basins for their petroleum potential (AMA).
Recognize that there is increased interest in oil and gas exploration and development both onshore and offshore in the Bristol Bay area and the Alaskan Peninsula. The State of Alaska and the Bristol Bay Native Association (BBNA) recently announced that ADNRR and BBNA have entered into an MOU designed to facilitate oil and gas lease sales on state and BBNA land in the Bristol Bay region (ADNRR).
Ensure flexibility to allow revenue-generating activities (i.e. gravel lots) (ADOT&PF).
Develop a plan for subsurface minerals in Copper River Katalla oil area (USFS, Juneau).
Address mineral zone in northern Tongass area (USFS, Juneau).
Be aware of price changes in gold (City and Borough of Juneau).
Identify lands in the Tongass National Forest suitable for gravel extraction (City and Borough of Juneau).

Mineral Development
Consider the issues of allotments; minerals, easements, and oil and gas in the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge (Kenai NWR).
NEPA Compliance
Include a clear and concise statement of the underlying purpose and need for the proposed RMP (USEPA).
Place all pertinent background information related to the purpose and need, for developing the RMP, in a separate “background” discussion, either preceding or following the purpose and need section discussing the direction of FLPMA and the need for the current planning effort (USEPA).
Include clearly defined goals in a single chapter (USEPA).
Identify (in a single location) all plans and directives, including dates of issuance, currently being used to manage resources/activities within the planning area (USEPA).
Include an assessment/discussion of the extent to which current management activities in the planning area (as defined in existing plans and programs) are consistent with the goals, objectives and direction of the proposed RMP (USEPA).
Include clearly defined steps (including time frames) to be taken to ensure that current management plans/activities found to be inconsistent with the RMP are revised to comply with the direction of the RMP. In cases where such plans may not currently exist, we recommend integrating their development into the RMP development process (USEPA).
Define goals, objectives and direction in the RMP so that they reflect a clear understanding of management direction and activities on lands proximate to those governed by the RMP (USEPA).
Include a clear indication of the significance (or lack thereof) of impacts predicted for each alternative, as required by NEPA (USEPA).
Identify all existing management plans for non-BLM lands that could potentially impact BLM lands and/or be impacted by actions on BLM lands subject to the direction of the RMP (USEPA).
Off-highway Vehicles
Manage OHVs, for responsible use in the Eklutna area (NVE).
Consider the Tsirku River OHV use. Four-wheelers, snow machines, skiers; are customary and traditional use of this subsistence area (Chilkat Indian Village IRA, Klukwan).
Consider joint planning on the issue of OHV use in the Chugach National Forest (USFS, Anchorage).
Address OHV use on state lands. Coordinate with management plans in special use areas, such as refuges and critical habitat areas that already have an OHV policy (ADF&G).
Consult with the state prior to developing policies regarding motorized use on state selected lands in the project area (ADNR).
Limit OHV use into West Creek area (City of Skagway).
Address OHV use in RMP (Juneau USFS, 4/28/03) (Mat-Su Borough).
Address OHV use in Butte/Knik area (Mat-Su Borough).
Consider snow machine recreational use on Kenai NWR. It is the largest in the nation (Kenai NWR).

Oil and Gas
Recognize that there are many mineral prospects, operating mines, placer districts and coalfields located within the Ring of Fire RMP planning area (ADNR).
Recognize that DNR is proposing to issue exploration licenses on approximately 948,480 acres within the Susitna Basin of approximately 1.5 million acres. There are two proposed licensing areas consisting of 47 townships. Activities in these areas may affect the communities of Willow, Caswell, Peters Creek, Skwetna, Talkeetna, Trapper Creek and Petersville. A final finding was expected to be released October 2001 (ADNR).
Be aware that Alaska's hypothetical coal resources exceed 5.5 trillion short tons, may contain up to 1,000 trillion cubic feet of gas, and particular areas are located in the project area (ADNR).
Include oil and gas activities within the Kenai NWR in the Draft EIS (CIK).
Define several potential routes for pipelines crossing the Alaska Peninsula for uses such as oil and/or gas shipment. Define these routes even if the water and port conditions on the Bristol Bay side are not optimum (AMA).
Recognize that an exploration-licensing program has been initiated by the State in order to stimulate exploration in Alaska's unexplored large sedimentary basins, particularly in portions of the North Slope, Cook Inlet, and interior Alaska. This program is designed to complement the oil and gas leasing program (ADNR).
AS 38.05.140 (f) states that within the area from south of Pilot Point through Kvichak Bay, north of Egigik Bay, no surface area entry permit to develop an oil or gas lease and gas exploration license may be issued on state owned or controlled land until the legislature by appropriate resolution specifically finds that the entry will not constitute danger to the fishery (ADNR).
Recognize that Shallow Natural Gas Leasing provides for non-competitive leases to explore for and develop natural gas reservoirs (including coalbed methane) in the Ring of Fire planning area, these lands are located in an area between Talkeetna and Wasilla, in Cook Inlet, the northern coast of the Alaska Peninsula, and the shoreward edge of the Gulf of Alaska (ADNR).
Create oil and gas leasing plan for remaining federal lands including area that have potential and are most likely to be developed (Kenai Peninsula Borough).
Other
Extend the Ring of Fire planning area in the Bristol Bay region to include the areas around Iliamna Lake and westward to Dillingham (Public Comment, Anchorage).
Include maps that clearly identify the BLM lands subject to management direction of the RMP; to provide the opportunity for the public to provide site-specific input directly applicable to the content and direction of the RMP; to reflect the ownership/management of non-BLM lands proximate to BLM lands to inform the public and decision maker of those lands (and ownership) that would not be governed by the direction of the RMP but could impact or be impacted by activities on BLM lands (USEPA).
Support the preservation of ranching enterprise of Chirikof to ensure the survival of the herd (Kodiak Soil and Water Conservation District).
Address seismic issues; could be worth considering the sensitivity of volcanic and geothermal areas (Aleutians West CRSA).

Other
Plan for competing issues in the Chilkoot River corridor such as vehicle congestion, bears/habitat, archeology, tourism, fish weir, grave sites/historical sites, etc. (Haines Borough).
Consider potential to sell power to cruise ships; potential fuel from future gas pipeline (City of Skagway).
Recreation
Prohibit helicopter tours after the heli-ski season ends in April of each year. Summer glacier landings are banned; therefore no summer helicopter tours are needed (Lynn Canal Conservation).
Limit commercial helicopter charters in Haines to heli-ski season only, the rest of the year it is in direct conflict with the other values of these lands (Public Comment, Haines).
Consult with the state prior to developing policies regarding helicopter use on state selected lands in this area (ADNR).
Continue helicopter access, routes, and landing on BLM land in Skagway area (NPS, Skagway).
Implement into management plan a number of recreational mining areas. This enhances the outdoor experience for many, and helps to generate local revenue (Public Comment, Anchorage).
Include non-consumptive, low-impact, non-motorized, outdoor pursuits such as bird and wildlife viewing, cross-country skiing and snowshoeing, hiking, and backpacking, fishing, kayaking and canoeing in your recreation plans. Promote these types of recreation, to preserve and protect the aesthetic and peaceful qualities of these areas from development and motorized recreation (Anchorage Audubon Society).
Focus recreation in areas that do not have significant mineral potential and are within the multitude of existing parks, refuges and wilderness areas (AMA).
Allocate recreational access for both motorized and non-motorized use. Use the Generally Allowed Uses on State Land when developing the management recommendations for state-selected lands (ADNR).
Consult with the state prior to developing policies regarding commercial recreation on state selected lands in the SLUD area (ADNR).
Expand recreation (Dewey Lakes area as a park, commercial hiking, dog sled tours, create own borough, goat hunting up West Creek) (City of Skagway).
Consider expanding accessibility to BLM lands in Skagway (MOA).
Consider USFS "Recreation Heritage Lands" program (USFS, Juneau).
Consider recreation issues in the Mat-Su area (Mat-Su Borough).
Create a plan for the 14 applications for rafting, boating, vans, etc. to support commercial tourism operation (Chilkat Indian Village IRA, Klukwan).
Preserve and protect natural scenic values for recreation and eco-cultural tourism economic development initiatives such as ice climbing, cultural camps, fee use fisheries development, climbing, photography, hiking, camping, guiding and cultural education (NVE).

Subsistence
Include information about threats and impacts on Tribal subsistence resources and cultures (CIK).
Protect and preserve land in its natural condition in order to maintain habitat for subsistence of plants and animals and to continue use for physical and spiritual sustenance (NVE).
Prepare for several watershed studies in the three rivers area of Klukwan, which has been an important area for subsistence (Chilkat Indian Village IRA, Klukwan).
Consider that OHV use in the Tsirku River area is for subsistence purposes (Chilkat Indian Village IRA, Klukwan).
Threatened and Endangered Species
Cooperate with other agencies 'to ensure that any action authorized, funded, or carried out by such agency is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of endangered species or threatened species.' Consider threatened District Population Segments of Steller sea lions, Pacific salmon and the humpback whale in the plan (NOAA).
Include the Cook Inlet Beluga whale status threat in the Draft EIS (CIK).
Timber Management and Harvest
Re-examine BLM lands withdrawn from mineral entry for lands suitable for resource extraction or timber (City and Borough of Juneau).
Visual Resources
Consider Chilkoot River corridor to be managed as a Visual Resource, and plan for it accordingly (Haines Borough).
Water Resources
Identify areas that are crucial for maintaining water quality and quantity in streams, lakes and watersheds. Develop plans to protect these water bodies and watershed features (Anchorage Audubon Society).
Include coal bed methane development and effects on water quality/quantity (CIK).
Include watershed non-point source pollution-from logging and expanding impervious surface coverage-adding to runoff, in the Draft EIS (CIK).
Recognize the State's management and ownership of its navigable waters (ADF&G).
Coordinate with the State on water bodies to resolve issues concerning ownership and use of rivers, lakes, and streams within the BLM owned lands where management conflicts arise (ADNR).
Expand city water, sewer and utilities in Skagway area (City of Skagway).
Consider delicate wildlife populations because of geographic constraints of the valley (City of Skagway).
Evaluate the importance of the mountaintops around Klukwan regarding water source and drinking water protection (Chilkat Indian Village IRA, Klukwan).

Wildlife and Habitat
Include wildlife in the RMP issues, wildlife viewing by locals as well as visitors is an integral part of our community (Public Comment, Haines).
Continue the mountain goat studies begun in 1995 by BLM biologist Jeff Denton and expand to a long-term study of the effect of aircraft, especially helicopters, on mountain goat populations (Public Comment, Haines).
Identify crucial habitats for birds (especially uncommon species) and mammals (game and nongame) and develop plans to protect these habitats from logging or significant impacts of mining, roads or other development, while encouraging public enjoyment. Include habitat corridors between areas. (Anchorage Audubon Society).
Research and manage wildlife in the Haines portion of the BLM, i.e. mountain goats, bear, moose, wolf, and wolverine Lynn Canal Conservation (LCC).
Study the effect of helicopter landings on goat populations in the Ring of Fire (LCC).
Engage in study for bear, wolves, moose, otter, wolverine, coho salmon, bald eagle use and mountain goat habitat preservation in the Ferebee watershed (LCC).
Protect and preserve the two-mile stretch of the Chilkat River that naturally remains open in winter and has become an important source of food, late runs of silver and chum salmon, for bald eagles and other birds (LCC).
Preserve the habitat on Chirikof Island to ensure the success of the unique Chirikof cattle (Kodiak Soil and Water Conservation District).
Recognize existing state authorities relative to fish and wildlife management (ADNR).
Acknowledge that the Native Village of Eklutna wants to keep its traditional lands environmentally sound and in natural condition and obtain, manage, or cooperatively manage and otherwise influence to protect the health of the village and environment. The tribe is pursuing funding to purchase wetlands and other important fish and wildlife habitat, to be managed under land trust status, or possibly under conservation easements (NVE).
Protect and preserve Knik Arm wetlands, which serve as important refuge and travel corridor for the animal resources (NVE).
Wild and Scenic Rivers
Consider several rivers, including the Tsirku and Takhin, for Wild and Scenic River designation (Public Comment, Haines).
Designate Tsirku, Takhin, and Ferebee Rivers as Wild and Scenic Rivers (LCC).
Consider some rivers, such as the Knik, for Wild and Scenic River designation (NVE).
Include identification of Wild and Scenic Rivers in the RMP (Public Comment, Anchorage).
Consider the fractionalization ownership pattern of BLM lands when assessing Wild and Scenic River candidates, and for this reason it is unlikely that any rivers in the planning area are suitable for Wild and Scenic River designation (ADNR).
Evaluate new Wild and Scenic River candidates (ADF&G).

The following table presents the scoping comments received organized by issue, number of comments per issue, number of written submissions per affiliation, and the total number of comments received. A complete summary of issues raised by affiliation are located in the Appendices: Appendix E - issues raised by the public, Appendix F - issues raised by federal, state, and local government, and Appendix G - issues raised by Native entities. See Key for table on page 28.

	Agency	Native	Public	Total
Access	17 – ADNR, USFS, CBH, NPS (Skagway), CoS, MSB, USFS (Juneau), MOA	3 – NVE, CIV	6 – CIK, AMA	26
Alaska Natives	5 – ADNR, USEPA	0	0	5
Areas of Critical Environmental Concern	2 – AWCERSA, NOAA	1 – NVE	1 – PUB (G. Beischer, Anch)	4
Coal	0	0	1 – AMA	1
Coordination and Compatibility	33 – NOAA, ADF&G, ADNR, USDA, USEPA, FAA, MSB, MOA, NPS (Anchorage), USFS (Juneau), CBJ, Kenai NWR, USFS (Anchorage)	5 – NVE, CIV	2 – PUB (C. Weishahn Haines), CIK	40
Cultural Resources	3 – AWCERSA, ADNR, CBH	1 – CIA	0	4
Enforcement and Monitoring	2 – USEPA, CBH	1 – CIA	0	3
Environmental Justice	5 – USEPA	0	0	5
Fire and Fuel Management	3 – USFS (Anchorage), KPB, Kenai NWR	1 – NVE	1 – PUB (M. Lynch Fairbanks)	5
Fish and Habitat	4 – ADNR	1 – NVE	0	5
Land Tenure/Status	26 – ADNR, USFS (Anchorage), CBH, CoS, MOA, CBJ, MSB, KPB	1 – CIA	3 – AMA	30
Land Use	10 – ADNR, CBH, MOA, CoS	1 – CIV	3 – AMA	14
Mineral Development	8 – ADNR, ADOT&PF, USFS (Juneau), CBJ, Kenai NWR	0	5 – AMA	13
Off-highway Vehicles	7 – USFS (Anchorage), ADF&G, ADNR, CoS, MSB, Kenai NWR	2 – NVE, CIV	0	9

Oil and Gas	7 –ADNR, KPB	0	3 – CIK, AMA	10
Other	3 – USEPA, AWCERSA, KSWCD, CBH, CoS	0	1 – PUB (P. Roehl, Anch)	4
Recreation	4 – ADNR, CoS,, MOA, NPS (Skagway), USFS (Juneau), MSB	2 – SEH, CIV	5 – PUB (G. Durocher, Anch), C Weishahn (Haines), AAS, LCC, AMA	11
Subsistence	0	3 – NVE, CIV	1 – CIK	4
Threatened and Endangered Species	1 – NOAA	0	1 – CIK	2
Timber Management and Harvest	1 – CBJ	0	0	1
Visual Resources	1 – CBH	0	0	1
Water Resources	4 – ADF&G, ADNR, CoS	1 – CIV	3 –AAS, CIK	8
Wetlands/Vegetation	1 – BLM	0	0	1
Wild and Scenic Rivers	2 – ADNR, ADF&G	1 – NVE	3 – PUB (C. Weishahn, Haines), LCC	6
Wildlife and Habitat	2 – KSWCD, ADNR	1 – NVE	7 – PUB (C. Weishahn (Haines), AAS, LCC	10
Wilderness	1 – ADNR	0	0	1
				232

<p>KEY:</p> <p>AA – Anchorage Agency</p> <p>AAS – Anchorage Audubon Society</p> <p>ADF&G – Alaska Department of Fish and Game</p> <p>ADOT&PF – Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities</p> <p>ADNR – Alaska Department of Natural Resources</p> <p>AWCRSA – Aleutians West Coast Resource Service Area</p> <p>AMA – Alaska Miner’s Association, Inc.</p> <p>BLM – Bureau of Land Management</p> <p>CBJ – City and Borough of Juneau</p> <p>CIA – Chilkoot Indian Association, Haines</p> <p>CoS – City of Skagway</p> <p>CIK – Cook Inlet Keeper</p> <p>FAA – Federal Aviation Administration</p>	<p>HB – Haines Borough</p> <p>CIV – Chilkat Indian Village IRA, Klukwan</p> <p>Kenai NWR – Kenai National Wildlife Refuge</p> <p>KPB – Kenai Peninsula Borough</p> <p>KSWCD – Kodiak Soil and Water Conservation District</p> <p>LCC – Lynn Canal Conservation</p> <p>MOA – Municipality of Anchorage</p> <p>MSB – Mat-Su Borough</p> <p>NOAA – National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration</p> <p>NPS – National Park Service</p> <p>NVE – Native Village of Eklutna</p> <p>PUB – Public</p> <p>USDA – United States Department of Agriculture</p> <p>USEPA – United States Environmental Protection Agency</p> <p>USFS – United States Forest Service</p>
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2.3 Issues Raised That Will Not be Addressed in the RMP

A number of issues raised during scoping will not be addressed in the RMP as explained below:

- Identify and recognize all easement and rights-of-way in this planning effort and work with the State to pursue recordable disclaimer of interests on the part of the BLM for the rights-of-way in this planning area. In an ongoing effort, BLM is working with the State on the issue of recordable disclaimer of interest. The planning document will not affect this effort.
- Prioritize access for transportation and utility infrastructure to mineralized areas and take into consideration the need for flexibility for implementation based on land ownership and physical characteristics. BLM will identify transportation and utility corridors where appropriate without assigning a priority to them.
- Joint plan for winter surface (motorized) use in Chugach National Forest (CNF). BLM will take the management practices of the adjoining landowners into consideration as it develops this RMP. The lands which share common boundaries between BLM and CNF are minimal and do not require the development of a joint plan.
- Plan for access for miners in Section 28 near Porcupine Road (access road is ADOT&PF responsibility).
- Consider connecting the Eklutna Water Line with the Abbott Reservation through the Campbell Tract. This decision is currently beyond the scope of the RMP.
- Resolve the issues concerning the ownership and use of rivers, lakes, and streams within BLM owned lands where management conflicts arise. This resolution is beyond the scope of the RMP.
- Resolve the access issue through the Dennis allotment, which is needed as an alternative route to access Chilkoot Lake and beyond. BLM revoked the powersite classification for Chilkoot Lake and has made the lands available for conveyance to the State.
- Access issues relating to the termination of ANCSA Sec. 17(b) easements will not be addressed in the plan because the administrative actions required to terminate easements are beyond the scope of the plan.
- Re-evaluation and possible termination of the Juneau Access Project is beyond the scope of this plan. The area affected by the Juneau Access Project is not managed by the BLM.
- Consult with the State and manage consistently any areas proposed for wilderness with the special provisions of ANILCA that amended the Wilderness Act of 1964. Wilderness will not be considered in the Ring of Fire RMP/EIS. The Secretary of the Interior reinstated the wilderness moratorium in Alaska on April 11, 2003.

2.4 Valid Existing Management to be Carried Forward

The RMP will, to the extent possible, consider the Southcentral Management Framework Plan (MFP) (1980, amended 1985 and 1998) and the Alaska Interagency Fire Management Plan. BLM currently manages the areas that lie within the Ring of Fire boundary and are not covered by the Southcentral MFP. BLM currently manages its lands and resources according to the guidance contained in 43 CFR 1610.8(b) (1). There are no other existing BLM RMPs or MFPs in the Ring of Fire planning area.

2.5 Anticipated Decisions to be Made

The RMP will be comprehensive in nature and will address issues within the Ring of Fire planning area, which have been identified through agency, interagency, and public scoping efforts. The decisions found in the RMP will fall into two categories: desired outcomes (goals, standards and objectives) and allowable uses and actions to achieve the desired outcomes. The desired outcomes are those decisions made upon completion of the RMP and are effective when the Record of Decision (ROD) for the RMP is signed and require no additional NEPA analysis. These include resource objectives such as ACEC designations; VSM class designations; OHV designations, and the identification of areas, which are open or closed to oil and gas leasing. There may be additional Secretarial review required to make some of these decisions effective. The second type of decision made is the implementation decision or allowable uses and actions to achieve the desired outcomes. These require the development of implementation plans, traditionally referred to as “activity plans.” Examples include recreation management plans and habitat management plans.

The RMP will address program specific and resource specific decision guidance consistent with the BLM Land Use planning Handbook (H-1601-1).

Finally, the RMP will explain or identify the current management situation, desired future conditions to be maintained or achieved, management goals, goals for continued management, and goals for multiple use management for the Ring of Fire. The RMP will determine appropriate methods and management actions to achieve the Ring of Fire objectives.

2.6 Special Designations, Including Nominations

The Ring of Fire planning process will consider data as it becomes available, and the recommendation and designation as appropriate of special management areas. BLM will also consider, as part of its planning process, information gathered from individuals and groups, tribes, and agencies and recommend and designate special management areas as appropriate.

3.0 DRAFT PLANNING CRITERIA

The BLM, other agencies, and the public will identify resource concerns. It must be emphasized that the following list of resource issues/management concerns are preliminary and may be modified, deleted, or added to, throughout the public input process. BLM will continue to consider comments on the planning criteria. Areas to be addressed include:

1. BLM lands to be addressed include: Lands where the land surface and mineral estate are administered by BLM; where the land surface is administered by BLM, but the mineral estate is not; where the mineral estate is administered by BLM but the surface estate is not; BLM will address the mineral resource unless it is within a National Park, National Monument, National Forest, or Wild and/or Scenic River or permanently withdrawn from entry.
2. Valid existing rights will be protected throughout the planning area.
3. Land tenure adjustments, disposals and acquisitions will be considered when in the National interest. Land acquisition or disposal options will include land transfers, exchanges, and sales as allowed under FLPMA, the Recreation and Public Purposes Act, and other laws.
4. Plans and policies of adjacent federal conservation system units, landowners and state and local governments will be considered, and RMP decisions will be consistent to the degree reasonably practical within existing laws.
5. Management prescriptions will be considered on adjoining lands to minimize inconsistent management. To the extent possible, inventories, planning, and management programs will be coordinated with other federal, state, local agencies, and tribal governments.
6. BLM will encourage and participate in collaborative planning and management. BLM will provide opportunity for input from other Federal agencies, the State of Alaska, local government, adjacent private landowners, local residents and other affected and/or interested parties.
7. Identification, designation and protection of special management areas such as, research natural areas, ACECs, outstanding natural areas, and other special management designations will be identified, and where appropriate, brought forward for analysis in the RMP.
8. Actions must comply with laws, EOs, regulations, and BLM supplemental program guidance.
9. Lands covered in the RMP will be public lands, which include split estate lands, managed by BLM.
10. A collaborative and multi-jurisdictional approach will be used, where possible, to jointly determine the desired future condition of public lands.
11. Management prescriptions will focus on the relative values of resources and not the combination of uses that will give the greatest economic return or economic output.

12. Current scientific information, research, new technologies and the results of inventory, monitoring and coordination to determine appropriate local, and regional management strategies will be used to enhance or restore impaired ecosystems.
13. Comprehensive Land Health Standards will apply to all activities and uses, as applicable.
14. The VRM class designations will be analyzed to reflect present conditions and future needs. Areas requiring modifications or restrictions for specific land uses to resolve conflicts will be identified.
15. Planning will include the preservation, conservation, and enhancement of important historic, cultural, paleontologic, and natural components of public land resources.
16. Coordination will be maintained with Indian tribes to identify sites, areas, and objects important to their cultural and religious heritage.
17. In accordance with the Endangered Species Act, regarding Section 7 Consultation, the BLM will prepare a request for consultation with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service and NOAA Fisheries.
18. River segments will be considered, and determinations of eligibility and suitability, tentative classification, and protective management will be made in accordance with Section 5 (d) of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act and BLM Manual 8351. Public nominations will be requested.

4.0 DATA SUMMARY/DATA GAPS

In many cases, existing resource information in the AFO will be used in preparation of the RMP. Portions of this data need to be updated, and put into digital format for use in the planning process and for the development of the resource related maps for the plan. These Geographic Information System themes are the building blocks to quantify resources, create maps, and represent resource data during alternative formulation. In addition to existing information, BLM will compile information from other agency sources to augment baseline inventory and resource condition within the Ring of Fire Planning area. New data obtained will conform to BLM's national data standards.

The 2001 Preparation Plan completed for the Ring of Fire included a data status table. The table includes the current data available, and data needs for each program area. The AFO staff has been assigned the task of identifying data gaps as part of the preparation of the Management Situation Analysis (MSA) documents. The table will be updated upon the completion of the MSAs, Draft RMP/EIS, and Final RMP/EIS.

5.0 SUMMARY OF FUTURE STEPS IN THE PLANNING PROCESS

Scoping is the first step in the planning process. Several more steps are necessary to complete the Ring of Fire RMP/EIS. The following chart depicts the requirements of BLMs planning process that fall within the framework of NEPA.

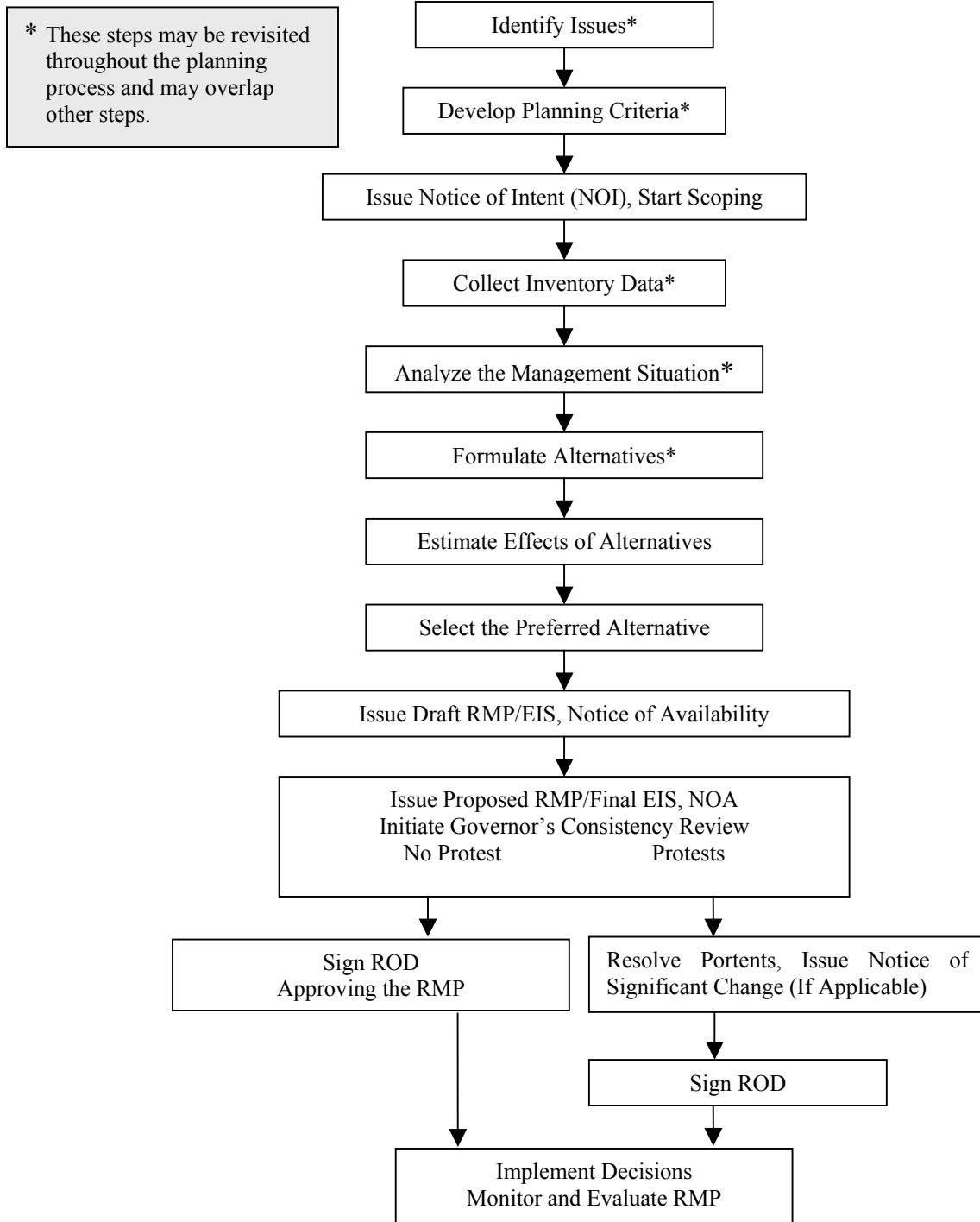


Figure 2 RMP/EIS NEPA Level Planning Process Steps

5.1 Analysis of the Management Situation

Analysis of the management situation is the next step in the process, which involves the use of existing information as well as information and data from new inventories and sources to describe the resources within the Ring of Fire planning area, the way the BLM manages those resources and opportunities to resolve issues identified through the scoping process. This analysis provides the baseline reference for the development and evaluation of alternatives.

5.2 Formulation of Alternatives

Alternatives will be formulated by identifying a range of reasonable combinations of resources and management practices that will address issues identified during scoping and that offer distinct choices among management strategies. This will include a no action alternative or a combination of existing management. This step will begin in September 2003 and continue through December 2003.

5.3 Estimating the Effects of the Alternatives

Once the alternatives are developed, the next step involves estimating the effects of each alternative on the environment and the current management situation. BLM expects to begin this process in September 2004 and end in January 2004.

5.4 Write and Publish the Draft RMP/EIS

This step will begin with the release of the Draft RMP/EIS for a 90-day review by the public that will include the Notice of Availability (NOA) published in the Federal Register, public hearings, and newsletters. BLM will begin this process in November 2004 and continue until August 2005.

5.5 Issue the Proposed Final RMP/EIS

Based on the information contained in the Draft RMP/EIS and the public comment received, BLM will select a proposed RMP and present it to the public as the Final RMP/EIS. This step will include public notices of the documents availability, the distribution of the document, and a 30-day protest period on the final document. BLM will begin this step in August 2005 and expects to complete the project at the end of 2005.

6.0 CONTACTS

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